

Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Expedited Procedure
Technology Center 1700

Application No.: 10/573,591
Art Unit: 1797

AMENDMENT

Please amend the pending application in accordance with the following particulars.

In the Claims

The claims are amended as shown on the following pages under the heading LIST OF CURRENT CLAIMS. The list shows the status of all claims presently in the application and is intended to supersede all prior versions of the claims in the application. Any cancellation of claims is made without prejudice or disclaimer.

LIST OF CURRENT CLAIMS

1-14 (Canceled).

15 (Currently Amended). Method for separating gases from a gas mixture, wherein the gas mixture to be treated is passed through a membrane separator by means of a compressor installation comprising a compressor element with liquid injection whose injected liquid is separated in a heated state at the exit of the compressor element, by a liquid separator, wherein the compressor installation that generates heat available for recuperation heating and wherein the compressed gas mixture to be treated is cooled at least in the compressor installation to separate condensate from the gas mixture, after which, as the compressed gas mixture leaves the compressor installation, the compressed gas mixture is re-heated before it is passed through membrane separator, comprising the step: said reheating comprising using recuperation the heat of the separated liquid to re-heat the gas mixture compressor installation.

16 (Previously Presented). Method according to claim 15, wherein, during the reheating step, use is made of the heat of the compressed gas mixture at the exit of a compressor element of the compressor installation.

17 (Currently Amended). Method according to claim 15, wherein, during the reheating step, use is made of a recuperation heat which is drawn from the compressed gas mixture to be treated while carrying carry out said cooling step.

18 (Canceled).

19 (Previously Presented). Method according to claim 15, wherein the compressor installation is equipped with a cooler for cooling the compressed gas mixture and in which a cooling medium is heated by the compressed gas mixture and thereby contains heat available for recuperation heating, comprising using the recuperation heat of the cooling medium during the reheating step.

20 (Previously Presented). Method according to claim 15, wherein after the cooling of the gas mixture, the gas mixture is passed through a dryer.

21 (Previously Presented). Method according to claim 20, wherein said dryer uses a desiccant.

22 (Previously Presented). Method according to claim 20, wherein the dryer is a cooling type dryer.

23 (Previously Presented). Method according to claim 15, wherein, after the cooling of the gas mixture the gas mixture is passed through a filter or through a set of filters and adsorption elements.

24 (Currently Amended). Device for separating gases from a gas mixture comprising: a compressor installation having an inlet and an outlet for a gas mixture to be treated, said compressor installation comprising a compressor element with liquid injection and a liquid separator incorporated in a compressed air line located at the exit of the compressor element, said exit being connected to the liquid injection system via a return line and a membrane separator whose entry is connected to the outlet via a supply line; and a radiator in the supply line through which the gas mixture to be

treated flows, wherein the radiator is part of [[a]] a heat exchanger included in said return line the compressor installation.

25 (Previously Presented). Device according to claim 24, wherein the heat exchanger is incorporated in a compressed air line between the exit of a compressor element and the exit of the compressor installation.

26 (Previously Presented). Device according to claim 25, wherein the heat exchanger is a cooler which is part of a cooling type dryer of the compressor installation.

27 (Canceled).

28 (Previously Presented). Device according to claim 24, wherein the compressor installation includes at least one cooling circuit and wherein the heat exchanger in the supply line to the membrane separator is part of the cooling circuit.

29 (Currently Amended). Method according to 15 [[18]], wherein the compressor installation further comprises a radiator positioned between the liquid separator and the membrane separator, which radiator forms a primary side of a heat exchanger, and wherein the compressor installation further comprises a by-pass line including an adjustable valve bridging a secondary side of the heat exchanger, wherein during the reheating step, the use of the heat of the separated liquid to re-heat the gas mixture is a function of the position of the valve.

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30 (Currently Amended). Device according to claim 24 [[27]], wherein said radiator forms a primary side of the heat exchanger and wherein the compressor installation further comprises a by-pass line including an adjustable valve bridging the a secondary side of the heat exchanger.